



United States Courts for the Ninth Circuit

Public Information Office

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Editor's Note: Media coverage of the conference general sessions is welcome. Advanced media registration will be required. To register, contact the Public Information Office.

NEWS RELEASE

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Ninth Circuit Judicial Conference to Focus on Future of Federal Courts

SPOKANE – Congressional relations, media coverage of the courts and national security are among the topics to be discussed during the 2005 Ninth Circuit Judicial Conference, which will be held July 18-21, 2005, at the Spokane Convention Center in Spokane, Wash. The annual event brings together judges and attorneys who preside or practice in the federal courts of the western United States.

The theme of this year's conference is "Perils and Possibilities: The Courts in an Uncertain World." A distinguished roster of speakers, panelists and presenters has been recruited from academia, government and the law. Topics to be covered during the General Sessions include:

- **Independent Judiciary: Third Branch or Third Rail (Tuesday, July 19, 8:30 a.m.)**

Relations between the Judiciary and Congress have been strained in recent years by various issues and tensions. There has been increasing legislative scrutiny of judges and judicial decisions, particularly decisions affecting congressional power. Judges, meanwhile, have seen their caseloads grow while the resources needed to operate the courts shrink. This panel discussion, which opens the first General Session, looks at the growing tension between the two branches of government and what might be done to reduce it. Moderated by Circuit Judge Robert A. Katzmann, the panel includes two federal judges who interact regularly with Congress and two former members of Congress from Washington State.

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Office of the Circuit Executive

95 Seventh St. P.O. Box 193939 San Francisco CA 94119-3939

- **From Judicial Action to Journalist Reaction: How the Media Views the Federal Courts (Tuesday, July 19, 10:30 a.m.)**

The federal court system may be the branch of government least well understood by the media. Part of what separates judges and journalists is their mutual lack of understanding of how the other works. This panel presentation, part two of the first General Session, examines how media coverage of the courts shapes the public's perception of the judiciary; how judges and lawyers interact with the media; and the constitutional, ethical and practical restraints under which the bench, bar and press operate. Moderated by Dean Donald Burnett of the University of Idaho College of Law, the panel includes three reporters, two from Washington state newspapers, and a radio talk show host.

- **Breakfast with the Bench – The Vanishing Trial: Crisis or Opportunity (Wednesday, July 20, 8:00 a.m.)**

The number of trials conducted in the federal courts has been declining for several years. The second General Session opens with a look at the "vanishing trial," what it really means, and what should be done about it, if anything. Cathy A. Costantino, counsel in the Labor and Employment Unit at the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC), will provide an overview of the topic, after which lawyers and judges will participate in an interactive table discussion of the phenomenon, how it affects them, whether or not it constitutes a problem, and what steps might be needed to address the issue.

- **The Future of National Security (Wednesday, July 20, 10:30 a.m.)**

What do experts in the field of national security think is likely to happen over the next five to 10 years? The second General Session continues with a panel discussion of the potential threats to national security that may face the United States in the foreseeable future. What is the magnitude of these threats? How will they involve the courts, the bar and citizens? Will they collide with our historical and traditional notions of civil liberties? Moderated by Dean Elizabeth Rindskopf Parker of the University of the Pacific McGeorge School of Law, the panel includes a former deputy secretary of defense, an assistant general counsel at the Central Intelligence Agency, and renowned author and former *New York Times* columnist Anthony Lewis, twice winner of the Pulitzer Prize and recipient of the Presidential Citizens Medal.

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- **Conversation with the Justice – Associate Justice Sandra Day O’Connor (Thursday, July 21, 8:30 a.m.)**

The “Conversation with the Justice” features an informal conversation with Associate Justice Sandra Day O’Connor, who regularly attends the conference as the designated U.S. Supreme Court justice for Ninth Circuit matters. Participating in the conversation with Justice O’Connor will be Circuit Judge Johnnie B. Rawlinson of the Ninth Circuit and attorneys Alan Schulman of San Diego, co-chair of the Conference Executive Committee, and Harvey Saferstein of Santa Monica, who chairs the circuit’s Lawyer Representatives Coordinating Committee.

- **Lost in Space: New Discoveries in the Cosmos (Thursday, July 21, 9:45 a.m.)**

The third and final General Session opens with a presentation on cosmology, the science of the origin of the universe, by Dr. Michael S. Turner, Ph.D., assistant director of the National Science Foundation for Mathematical and Physical Sciences and the Rauner Distinguished Service Professor at the University of Chicago. Dr. Turner is one of the pioneers of the interdisciplinary field that brings cosmologists and elementary particle physicists together to study the earliest moments of creation. His current research focuses on cosmic acceleration and other scientific mysteries.

- **Staying Healthy: Preserving Memory and Mental Agility Throughout Life (Thursday, July 21, 11:15 a.m.)**

Misplace your car keys? Forget your glasses? Memory lapses can trigger anxiety about losing our mental edge as we grow older. Now new research is unlocking the mysteries of memory and revealing ways to keep our memories sharp. The final General Session program features a presentation by Dr. Soo Borson, M.D., professor and director of Geriatric and Family Services at the University of Washington School of Medicine in Seattle .

The 2005 conference is being organized by a Conference Executive Committee co-chaired by Chief District Judge David F. Levi of Sacramento and attorney Alan Schulman of San Diego. Magistrate Judge Sandra M. Snyder of Fresno chairs the program subcommittee. Ninth Circuit Chief Circuit Judge Mary M. Schroeder will preside over the opening session and participate in other parts of the conference.

The Ninth Circuit Judicial Conference meet pursuant to Section 333 of Title 28 of the United States Code for “the purpose of considering the business of the courts and advising means of improving the administration of justice within such circuit.”

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